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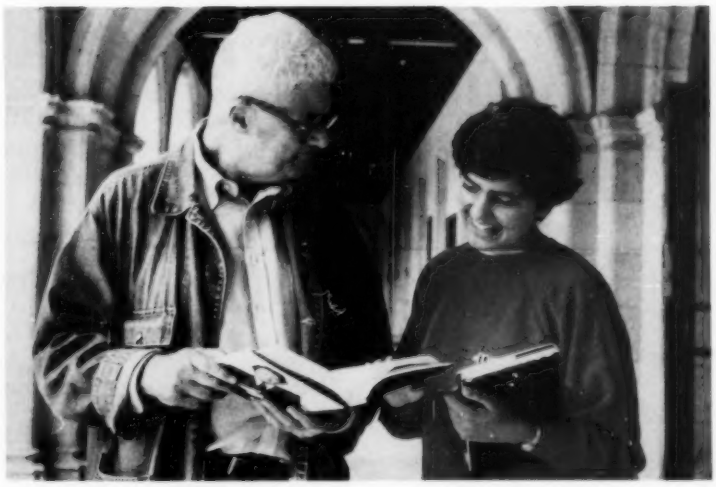
Howard Nemerov Appointed to Second Term as Poet Laureate



Howard Nemerov with a student (photo: Herb Leitman, Washington Univ., St. Louis)

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Howard Nemerov has been appointed for a second term as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress. He began the new term by giving the opening lecture of the fall literary season, titled "Language, Nonsense, and Poetry," on October 2.

Howard Nemerov was the recipient of the 1978 Pulitzer Prize in poetry, and of numerous other awards, among them the Theodore Roethke Memorial Prize for Poetry (1968), the National Book Award in Poetry (1978), and the Bollingen Prize for poetry (1981). He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets, and a member of both the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Born in 1920 in New York City, Howard Nemerov received his

(Cont. on p. 350)

Also in This Issue . . .

Hebraic Section celebrates 75th anniversary 350

Report from Association of Jewish Libraries 351

"Evenings with Authors" series 352

Library issues *USMARC Code List for Languages* 355

Guide to free-floating subdivisions 355

Report from CNLIA 355

Nemerov *(Cont. from p. 349)*

A.B. degree from Harvard University in 1941. He has taught at Hamilton College, Bennington College, Brandeis University, and Hollins College. He served as Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress in 1963–64. In 1969 he became the Fannie Hurst Professor of Creative Literature at Washington University in St. Louis, where he is now the Edward Mallinckrodt Distinguished University Professor of English.

Of his 11 books of poetry, *War Stories: Poems About Long Ago and Now* (1987) is the latest, his *Collected Poems* having been published in 1977. He is also the author of three novels and two collections of short stories. A renowned essayist for more than 20 years, he has gathered his essays in *Poetry and Fiction: Essays* (1963) and six more collections, of which *The Oak and the Acorn* (1983) is the most recent.

During his productive 1988–89 term as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry, Mr. Nemerov introduced readings in the Library's literature series; gave poetry seminars in the Poetry Room to high school students; officiated at a

(Cont. on p. 352)

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Bruce Tapper, Editor

Hebraic Section Celebrates 75th Anniversary

Guest curator Abraham J. Karp (left) discussing the preview exhibit with Rep. Sander M. Levin; Winston Tabb, acting Deputy Librarian of Congress; unidentified guest; Mrs. Ben Erdreich; and Rep. Tom Lantos.

Head of the Library's paper conservation section Doris Hamburg (second from right) explains preservation strategies for a megillah, scroll of the Book of Esther, to Dr. Boorstin (left), Rep. Hamilton Fish, Jr., Carol Waxman, unidentified guest, Rep. Henry Waxman, and Michael Waxman.

Mark E. Talisman, president of Project Judaica Foundation, displays to AJL attendees a printer's proof from a planned Library of Congress facsimile of the "Washington Hagaddah," an illuminated 15th-century manuscript in the Library's collections.

The Library of Congress joined with the Project Judaica Foundation of Washington, D.C., to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Library's Hebraic Section by sponsoring a reception and lecture on June 19.

In attendance were about 230 members of the Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL), which was holding its annual meeting in Washington, and several Congressmen and their wives: Rep. Anthony C. Beilenson (D-Calif.) and Mrs. Beilenson; Ellen Erdreich, wife of Rep. Ben Erdreich (D-Ala.); Rep. Hamilton Fish, Jr. (R-N.Y.); Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman (R-N.Y.); Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) and Mrs. Lantos; Rep. Sander M. Levin (D-Mich.); Rep. Mel Levine (D-Calif.); Rep. Henry A. Waxman (D-Calif.); and Sen. Timothy E. Wirth (D-Colo.).

Librarian of Congress Emeritus Daniel J. Boorstin made welcoming remarks and introduced Mark E. Talisman, president of the Project Judaica Foundation, who described the joint efforts of the Library and the foundation to mark the 75th anniversary.

The lecture was presented by Abraham J. Karp, professor at the University of Rochester and guest curator of the Library's forthcoming exhibition titled, "From the Ends of the Earth: Judaic Treasures of the Library of Congress." Samples of these treasures are currently on display in the sixth floor lobby of the Madison Building.

Founded as the Semitic Division in July 1914, the Hebraic Section has long been esteemed as one of the world's foremost centers for the study of Hebrew and Yiddish materials. Its beginnings can be traced to gifts by Jacob H. Schiff in 1912 and 1914 of nearly 15,000 books and pamphlets from the collections of Ephraim Deinard, well-known bibliographer and bookseller. In the years that followed these initial gifts, the Library has developed and expanded its Hebraic holdings to include materials of research value in Hebrew and related languages. Today, the section houses some 125,000 volumes in Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino (Judeo-Spanish), Judeo-Persian, Judeo-Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, and Amharic.

In addition to the planned exhibition, the Library will publish a facsimile edition of its "Washington Haggadah" (1478), an illuminated medieval manuscript from the Hebraic collections of the Library of Congress. A Haggadah comprises the account of the exodus and associated texts recited at the ceremonial passover meal. The facsimile of this 15th-century Haggadah, which will appear in a limited edition of 500 copies, will be accompanied by a volume of commentary with essays on the structure, the text, and the illustrations of the manuscript, as well as an article on its conservation treatment at the Library of Congress. The publication of the facsimile edition is being made possible through the generosity of the Project Judaica Foundation.

Association of Jewish Libraries Meets In Washington, D.C.

The Association of Jewish Libraries held its 24th Annual Convention in Washington, D.C., June 18–21.

The Embassy of Israel was the site of the opening session on June 18. In his welcoming remarks, an embassy spokesman discussed the political situation in Israel.

The keynote address was delivered by Arnost Lustig, award-winning author and professor of literature and film at American University. A native of Czechoslovakia, who survived the Holocaust and became a successful writer in his native country after the War before coming to the United States, he discussed the different approaches to the Holocaust as a theme in literature. For a writer committed to Jewish tradition, like Elie Wiesel, faith in God is sorely tested. A more assimilated Jew like Primo Levi of Italy can find little meaning in his suffering.

(Cont. on p. 352)

Nemerov *(Cont. from p. 350)*
popular poetry tea for congressional wives and wives of diplomats; visited the Soviet Union for two weeks in January; and wrote, by invitation, a poem in celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the U.S. Congress, which he read at a Joint Meeting of the House and Senate in the House Chamber in March. He also has recently written a poem about the launching of the space shuttle Atlantis, an event which he was invited by NASA to witness and document.

This year the Poet Laureate, continuing a popular feature of his first term, will conduct informal poetry seminars for high school students at the Library. These seminars, limited to 50 students at a time, must be arranged in advance by teachers, who should call the Poetry Office, (202) 707-5394. Mr. Nemerov's schedule this year is announced in advance to facilitate the seminars and other engagement planning: he will be in residence at the Library the first week of October and November; the second week of December; and from the first week of February through June.

"Evenings with Authors" Series to Feature Cabaret Setting

A new cabaret setting will be used by the Library of Congress for its new season of poetry and literature programs.

The Library's Poetry Office is presenting its public literary programs in new locations at a new time due to the closing of the Library's Coolidge Auditorium until 1993 for renovation. Most literary programs will take place in the Montpelier Room, a pleasant rooftop setting with a commanding view of the south and southwest of the city. The new programs with authors will take place at 6 p.m. on Thursday evenings. The new time and setting are designed to foster conversational give-and-take between the audience and guest speakers, and it is anticipated that the earlier hour will be more convenient for those wishing to attend directly from work.

The first program of the season was a talk by Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Howard Nemerov on October 2 in the Mumford Room (this is the only program to be held outside the Montpelier Room). Mr. Nemerov, who has accepted his appointment for a second term as Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry, presented a talk titled "Language, Nonsense, and Poetry."

In addition to the opening lecture by Howard Nemerov, the new season includes a PEN Syndicated Fiction award winners' reading on November 16; a reading by Lucille Clifton on November 30; a program devoted to comedy in early December; and a reading for Black History Month by Dolores Kendrick from her book *The Woman of Plums* on February 15. Further program details will be announced.

For the new evening cabarets with authors, the southwest entrance to the Madison Building will be open until 9:30 p.m. It is convenient to the Capitol South station of Metro's blue and orange lines.

AJL *(Cont. from p. 351)*
Mr. Lustig himself seemed to have a more detached attitude, not expecting too much out of life. In the question and answer period following his address, he suggested that children should be encouraged to read *The Diary of Anne Frank* because it describes the atmosphere of persecution from a child's point of view, rather than the stark horrors of the concentration camps which might frighten children and have negative effects on their psyches.

On June 19 the meetings were held at the Library of Congress. After a brief welcome by Henriette D. Avram, assistant librarian for processing services, the first topic considered was "Hebrew On-Line: Current Issues and Future Concerns."

Lucia J. Rather, director for cataloging, Library of Congress, chaired a panel discussion participated in by John A. Eilts, program officer, Middle Eastern Studies, Research Library Group (RLG), Stanford, Calif.; Rosalie Katchen, Hebraica librarian, Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.; and Paul Maher, assistant section head, English Language 3, Descriptive Cataloging Division, Library of Congress. The enhancements made possible in the RLIN (Research Library Information Network) system so that cataloging data in non-roman scripts such as Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Hebrew can be displayed along with the romanized data are welcomed by users and librarians working with materials in these language areas. Naturally, there are still many problems to be addressed to make these records even more accessible.

Mr. Eilts pointed to the difficulty of searching for Hebrew words with prefixes denoting articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, which in the romanized form are separated by a hyphen, but in the Hebrew original are part of the word.

Ms. Katchen expressed the concerns of many Jewish libraries, which up until now in their manual catalogs had represented the body of their entries only in the vernacular form and for whom complete romanization of the data in the MARC format is difficult and time consuming, regarding the acceptability of their records in the RLIN cooperative system. Her library is petitioning RLG to permit contributing libraries to romanize the uniform title and title proper only, assuring accessibility to the searcher in the romanized catalog. Mr. Maher dealt with the proposal to add the vernacular form of a personal name or corporate body to the authority record, which is possible under this system. He also discussed the pros and cons of setting up a preferred vernacular name in the authority record. The trade-off between additional accessibility and the time involved to do the necessary research, which might better be used for

producing additional catalog entries, must be seriously considered.

"Judaica Research: Works-in-Progress" was the title of the next session, chaired by Julian W. Witherell, chief of the African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress. Robert Singerman, head of the Price Library of Judaica at the University of Florida at Gainesville, recounted his efforts in the preparation of *Judaica Americana to 1900*, a revision and updating of a bibliography of items of Jewish interest, printed in the United States up to 1850, published some 60 years ago by A.S.W. Rosenbach. It will have 6,500 titles, listing 23,000 locations, 43 percent at the Hebrew Union College Library in Cincinnati, Ohio; 35 percent at the New York Public Library; and 28 percent at the Library of Congress. The strategies in the compilation of this list were both conventional and non-conventional. Research grants helped in visiting various libraries.

Frank Joseph Shulman, curator of the East Asia Collection, McKeldin Library, University of Maryland at College Park, is working on *Doctoral Dissertations in Jewish Studies and Related Subjects, 1945–1990*. It will contain entries for some 15,000 dissertations accepted at academic institutions around the world. It will appear in two volumes, the first dealing with Biblical studies and the ancient Near East, the second with Jewish history and civilization since 70 A.D.

The Library of Congress Copyright Office contains much unpublished material. Irene Heskes, a musicologist in New York, is carrying out a cherished project of the late Lawrence Marwick, head of the Hebraic Section in the African and Middle Eastern Division, *Copyrighted and Sung: American Yiddish Songs, 1895–1950*. It will include a chronological listing of 3,427 songs with annotations giving their historical background. This is an important aspect of American Jewish life, as the popular Yiddish song mirrored the aspirations of the largely immigrant community, struggling to find its place in the New World, yet looking back nostalgically to the Old.

During the afternoon several round tables were held, designed to acquaint the visitors with Library of Congress operations in processing, acquisition, preservation, and research.

Toby G. Rossner, media coordinator of the Bureau of Jewish Education for Rhode Island, and Lillian Schwartz, librarian of Temple Emanuel in Providence, R.I., spoke for synagogue librarians on "Parent Involvement in Teaching Jewish Values Through Literature." As parents read stories and legends from the voluminous literature now available, they can help make the Jewish past live again. Y.L. Peretz's story, "If Not Higher," about a rabbi who disguises himself as a simple peasant to help poor people instead of attending services, can be used as a lesson in charity and true commitment to serve one's fellow man. Jewish literature is a treasure of such parables and legends that has become increasingly present in English versions.

Later in the afternoon, the Library of Congress held a reception to welcome the visiting delegates, at which they were greeted by Librarian of Congress Emeritus Daniel J. Boorstin, who emphasized that the love of books is a basic tenet of the Jewish tradition, and who gave several examples of book lovers who in emergencies saved precious books before rescuing their other choice possessions.

The day's program concluded with an address by Abraham J. Karp, professor of Jewish studies at the University of Rochester, and guest curator of the forthcoming exhibition, "From the Ends of the Earth: Judaic Treasures of the Library of Congress." The exhibition will feature rarities of early Hebrew printing; early editions of the Bible in Hebrew and translations; and editions of the Talmud—one from 16th-century Basel and another produced for Holocaust survivors in Germany after World War II. The Library also boasts a large collection of Holy Land maps and beautifully illuminated manuscript marriage contracts (*ketubbot*), many from Italy and the Middle East. The Library also has some manuscript material of Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud and of famous Jewish musicians, such as George Gershwin and Ernest Bloch.

On June 20 the meetings resumed in the Quality Inn on Capitol Hill. "Getting the Word Out: The Making of Judaica Exhibitions" was a program chaired by Michael Grunberger, head of the Hebraic Section, African and Middle Eastern Division, Library of Congress. Participating were the curators of three recent exhibits of rare Judaica and Hebraica: Leonard S. Gold, Dorot Chief Librarian of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, New York, N.Y., (*A Sign and a Witness: 2,000 Years of Hebrew Books and Illuminated Manuscripts*, at the New York Public Library); Brad Sabin Hill, curator of the Lowy Collection, Rare Book Division, National Library of Canada at Ottawa (*Hebrew Manuscripts and Books from the Valmadonna Trust* [London, England], at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York); and Philip E. Miller, librarian at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York (*A Visual Testimony: Judaica From the Vatican Library*, held in Miami, Fla.). The editors of the catalogs for these exhibits also participated in the program.

The curators described how they had selected the various items in their exhibitions and the exaltations as well as the frustrations attendant to such enterprises. Dr. Gold had utilized the funds from the Astor Fellowship at his library for traveling "from Copenhagen to Cairo" to assemble the New York Public Library exhibit. The 50

(Cont. on p. 354)

AJL *(Cont. from p. 353)*
items from the Valmadonna Trust assembled by Mr. Hill consist of five manuscripts from before the invention of printing, ten incunabula, and 35 16th-century Hebrew printed books, mostly from Italy, although a few German and Polish presses are also represented. Mr. Miller drew from the Vatican Library, which is particularly rich in Hebrew manuscripts and early Hebrew printed books because Italy was the center of early Hebrew printing.

"Off the Beaten Path: Some Recent Trends in Judaica Collecting" was a session chaired by Charles Berlin, the Lee M. Friedman Bibliographer in Judaica at Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Mass.

Zachary Baker, head librarian of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York, dealt with "Reinventing the Jew in Absentia: Recent Judaica Publishing Trends in Poland." Several hundred books of Jewish interest have appeared in Poland during the last few years, although the Jewish community has shrunk in numbers to less than 10,000. Until recently an honest discussion of the Holocaust and the attitude of the Polish population during World War II towards the Jews had not been conducted. Yet some Polish Catholic intellectuals are now writing more sympathetically about Jewish life in the country's past, and much has been published about the help given to Jews by Christians during the Holocaust.

Eliezer M. Wise, director of the Mordecai M. Kaplan Library at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote, Pa., asked, "What Current Factors Affect the Publication of Traditional Literature?" While the publication of original works of rabbinic commentaries to the Bible and the Talmud as well as reprints of the classics continues unabated, the recent phenomenon of the "ba'al teshuvah,"—Jews previously estranged from religion and not conversant with Hebrew who wish to return to traditional roots—has resulted in the publication of many works in English and many bilingual editions of parts of the Bible and other Jewish classics with English anthologies of traditional commentaries. The Art Scroll Publishers specialize in this particular genre, and Philip Feldheim has published many works on Orthodox Judaism in English.

Sara Ben-Baruch, Judaica ephemera preservation specialist at Harvard University Library, related her adventures in "Collecting Israeli Ephemera." In spite of many obstacles she has accumulated more than 155,000 posters, election broadsides, and playbills from Israel. She has also acquired many of the memorial books and pamphlets issued by the Kibbutzim on the deaths of their members, an important resource on life in Israel.

At lunch Evelyn Torton Beck, professor and director of the Women's Studies Program at the University of Maryland at College Park, spoke on "Jewish Women's Voices: Past and Present."

"Meet the Jewish Press: Presentations by Editors of Jewish Periodicals" was next on the program. Jeff Rubin, the editor of *B'nai B'rith International Jewish Monthly*, one of the most widely distributed Jewish magazines in the United States, stressed that the publisher is supreme, but the editor must see to it that the integrity of the editorial content is preserved. Aaron Rosenbaum, editor of the editorial page of *Washington Jewish Week*, a weekly tabloid that boasts a local circulation of 20,000, pointed to the greater editorial depth and more critical coverage of Jewish news in the Jewish press these days, as general newspapers are also increasingly publishing items of Jewish interest. The relative affluence of Jewish readers makes Jewish periodicals attractive to general advertisers, thus placing the periodicals on a better financial footing. Hershel Shanks, editor and publisher of *Bible Review*, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, and more recently *Moment*, an independent Jewish monthly, stressed that the journalist must keep his ear to the ground and find out what really arouses people's interest. At the same time he said the independent publisher must never forget that he is engaged in a business.

At a cataloging workshop for the Research and Special Libraries Division of AJL, Paul Maher and Theodore Wiener, Judaica cataloger in the Library of Congress' Subject Cataloging Division, fielded questions about the problems relating to the preparation of cataloging data for publications in Hebrew, Yiddish, and other languages. There is a dilemma of conflicting demands for multiple subject access, requiring more time spent with each book, and the pressure to have the information ready for users, they noted. The question of a standard for romanization of Hebrew seems to have been largely resolved by the new Library of Congress manual, *Hebraica Cataloging*, prepared by Paul Maher. A good knowledge of Hebrew grammar is required to romanize the Hebrew titles which are usually unvocalized and require the reader to supply the missing vowels. The rules for entry of Hebrew authors have been modified to allow the use of romanized forms appearing in the work, rather than systematic romanization, although previously established name headings will not be changed.

Programs for the Synagogue, School, and Center Division held during the convention focussed particularly on automation. A three-part course, "Automating the Small Library," was especially geared to those librarians who are often faced with a bewildering choice of various computer systems.

A series of awards was presented. The outstanding Jewish reference

book of the year was *Yiddish Linguistics: A Multilingual Bibliography*, by Joan G. Bratkowsky (Garland, 1988). The best children's books recognized were *The Keeping Quilt*, by Patricia Polacco (Simon & Schuster), and *The Devil's Arithmetic*, by Jane Yolen (Viking, 1988). For an unpublished manuscript Suzi Wizowati's *Borders* was selected.

Special Recognition Awards were given to publishers Judye Saypol Groner and Madeline Wikler of Kar-Ben, Inc., Rockville, Md., for the quality of their children's books.

Life Membership Awards were bestowed on two founding leaders of AJL: Miriam Leikind, of Cleveland, Ohio, who initiated the *Index to Jewish Periodicals*, and Mae Weine, of Detroit, Mich., who developed the *Weine Classification of Judaica*, which has passed through several editions and is used in many synagogue libraries. A Life Membership Award was also presented to Theodore Wiener, for reporting on the AJL conventions in the LC *Information Bulletin* since 1966, for representing the Association in the Council of National Library and Information Associations, and for participating in the cataloging workshops at AJL conventions over the years.

For the coming year, Marcia Posner, Judaica library consultant at the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Library in New York City, will continue to serve as president.

—Theodore Wiener

Library Issues New Edition of *USMARC Code List for Languages*

USMARC Code List for Languages, 1989 Edition is now available from the Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service.

This revised document contains a list of languages and their associated three-character alphabetic codes for use in the designation of languages in USMARC records.

USMARC Code List for Languages, 1989 Edition contains both codes for individual languages and codes for language groups which are used when infrequent occurrence of a language does not warrant an individual code. It is arranged in two alphabetical parts, a name sequence and a code sequence.

The 1989 edition of the list is a revision of *USMARC Code List for Languages*, published in 1987. It includes the addition of almost 200 new languages which have been assigned group codes, more than 200 new references, and about 50 changes to existing references. No new codes have been added, although some captions have been changed.

USMARC Code List for Languages, 1989 Edition (ISBN 0-8444-0656-2) is designed to be used with the *USMARC Bibliographic Format*. It is for sale from the Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20541; phone (202) 707-6100.

Library Publishes Guide To Free-floating Subdivisions

Catalogers and reference librarians can find free-floating subdivision information and subject headings quickly with *Free-floating Subdivisions: An Alphabetical Index*, just published by the Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service (CDS). Prepared by the Office of the Principal Cataloger, Subject Cataloging Division, it is a handy companion to the *Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings*.

This new tool guides users quickly from the free-floating subdivisions of their choice to chapters in the *Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings* where "how-to" information for applying free-floating subdivisions is discussed. Featuring a practical, single alphabetic listing, the publication contains every free-floating subdivision in the Library of Congress Subject Headings online system and is current through Weekly List 89/17.

Available for $20, *Free-floating Subdivisions: An Alphabetical Index* can be ordered from the Customer Services Section, Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, Washington DC 20541; telephone: (202) 707-6100.

Report from CNLIA

The Council of National Library and Information Associations (CNLIA) held its semiannual meeting at the 60 East Club in New York City on May 5.

Among the committees reporting, the one on preservation is surveying the projects that are being undertaken by the various member associations. It was reemphasized that the Standard on Acid Free Paper of the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) should be supported by all associations.

A discussion on association archives included information by all the representatives present on the disposition of the archival material of their respective organizations.

There was also a discussion of the recent practice of the U.S. Copyright Office denying copyright registration to the work of compilers and transcribers of public records, unless original work of editing was involved. The argument centers around the amount of originality involved in each case.

"The Special Libraries Association: Update and Goals" was the topic of David R. Bender, its executive director. He outlined the many training progams of the organization, particularly those for managers and library directors. The organization, having grown to 12,000 members, includes not only librarians in business and industrial organizations, but also in public and university libraries with special interests.

Theodore Wiener, subject cataloger at the Library of Congress, chaired the meeting.

Meetings and Events Around the Library

Wednesday, October 18

☐ "Unfair Labor Practice Investigation," Peter Sutton, supervisory attorney, Federal Labor Relations Authority. Labor Relations Seminar Series. West Dining Room, 11:30 a.m. **For supervisors and managers.**

Thursday, October 19

☐ Black Gospel Music, Outdoor Concert Series, American Folklife Center. Neptune Plaza, 12 noon.

☐ "All the World's a Stage," demonstration meeting presented by the Capitol Hill Toastmasters Club. LC Professional Association (LCPA). Room LM 407, 12:10 p.m.

Thursday, October 26

☐ "Living with Team Management," Susan Vita, project director, Whole Book Cataloging Project. LCPA. Room LM 642, 12:10 p.m.

Monday, November 13

☐ Contract Administration, Carol Johnson, vice president for library services and products, Aspen Systems Corp. FLICC brown bag lunch series. Dining Room A, 11:30 a.m.

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